

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

homemakers' chat

FOR USE IN NON-COMMERCIAL BROADCASTS ONLY

U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

MONDAY, July 28, 1941

Subject: LIGHTEN YOUR LAUNDRY LOAD. Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and State agricultural experiment stations.

--ooOoo--

Here's Monday---washday again. While your duds soak in the suds, maybe you'd like to consider a few little ways to make today's work easier. You know, you can get into a rut about washing as you can about most other household jobs. You can get into the habit of doing your washing and ironing in the same old hard way, and you can get into the habit of being tired and cross Monday evening.

But how about looking into the job with an idea of saving yourself all possible extra strain and labor? How about thinking over little ways to save your eyes, shoulders, arms, back, feet--and disposition, too?

Here are a few suggestions on how to ease up washday. First, have good light on your washing and ironing. Good daylight and good artificial light. So many women wash and iron week after week in a dingy laundry room with only a tiny window or a dim electric bulb. That's such a strain on eyes--and temper, too. Washing in poor light you can't see all the spots and dirt on clothes; you have difficulty getting them clean. Ironing in poor light often causes scorching on clothes.

So think a little about the light on your work. The most efficient and comfortable light comes from the side instead of in front. Light from the side doesn't shine directly into your eyes. If you're right-handed, the best light for you comes from the left side. If you're left-handed, it comes from the right. A window directly over the washtub may not give

18. HOM.

as comfortable light as one to the side. And that's why many a smart housewife has her tubs and ironing board set at right angles to the window rather than underneath. A smart housewife also has ^{her} electric light placed so it will shine down directly on the tub and ironing-board. Here's another hint about good light for washday jobs. White paint or light-colored paint on walls and ceiling helps brighten the room.

Next to good light, right height is important for both washtubs and ironing boards. Strain and backache often come from bending over work that is too low. Strain and aches in arms and shoulders often come from stretching up to work that is too high. Many women never realize that wrong working heights are responsible for many of their washday aches and washday weariness.

Of course, there is no standard correct height for washtubs and ironing boards. The height you need depends on your own height and build--on how long your arms are, and whether you are long-waisted or short-waisted. But you can get an idea of average heights, and then try them out to see if they are comfortable for you. Many portable ironing boards for sale in stores stand about 31 inches from the floor. But a study of working heights made at the Oregon and Washington State experiment stations showed that the average housewife in the Northwest is most comfortable ironing at a board 32 and a half inches from the floor.

As for washtubs, a report from Kansas suggests that a woman 5 feet 5 is most comfortable washing at a tub 35 inches from the floor.

Feet as well as backs can suffer on washday. So another way to ease up washing and ironing is to have a rubber pad to stand on. This is especially helpful if you have a cement floor. A rubber mat not only rests tired feet; it's a protection against electric shock in the laundry in case the floor is wet.

7/28/41

Another way to save your feet and your back is to have a stool with a back support--a stool just the right height for your ironing board. Then you can sit down to your ironing.

Some women say they don't like to sit down to iron because it means so much jumping up and down. You have to get down off the stool every time you finish a piece, they say. But that isn't necessary if you have a table holding the damp clothes within reach of your right hand, and a standing rack on your left where you can hang each piece as soon as you finish it.

Here's another washday help--a clothes basket on wheels so you can roll the clothes from laundry to line and back again. No lifting and lugging heavy baskets of clothes. If you haven't a clothes basket set on wheels, maybe you can borrow your young son's express wagon and set the clothes basket on that.

Well, there are just a few little suggestions to lighten your laundry work. Maybe some of these ideas will help change blue Monday to sunny Monday for you.

#####

